

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. ALBIO SIRE

OF NEW JERSEY

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, July 31, 2007

Mr. SIRE. Madam Speaker, on July 30, 2007, I missed rollcall vote Nos. 758, 759, 760, 761, and 762. Had I been present, I would have voted "yes" on rollcall 758, "yes" on rollcall 759, "yes" on rollcall 760, "yes" on rollcall 761, and "yes" on rollcall 762.

REAUTHORIZING THE UNDERGROUND RAILROAD EDUCATIONAL AND CULTURAL PROGRAM

SPEECH OF

HON. STEPHANIE TUBBS JONES

OF OHIO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, July 30, 2007

Mrs. JONES of Ohio. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in strong support of H.R. 2707 which acknowledges the necessity to continue funding the Underground Railroad Educational and Cultural Program. Reflecting upon the nearly four hundred years of slavery, another century and a half of severe violations of American civil rights and continued hardship experienced by minorities everywhere, I feel that this measure warrants our support. The time has come for tolerance and understanding to triumph over racism and bigotry.

Our society is one that was formed by those who sought and dared to believe in freedom. Though these individuals committed transgressions of their own, they set the cornerstone for a union of states based on eminent documents and progressive ideals. Just to whom the notions of liberty, prosperity and happiness applied, would have to be settled in an undiplomatic nature, yet thankfully and virtuously the rights of all men prevailed. Before the Compromise of 1820 was agreed upon, a network now known as the Underground Railroad began to take form between those that wanted to gain and to give the ability to live freely.

Now legally armed with the rights and privileges endowed to all men and women, we find our society struggling to remain committed to not only remembering the plight of those who struggled to gain their freedom but what freedom explicitly implies. The struggle of protecting one's civil rights and the capability to act in one's best interests now faces our nation. We have developed as a people but must not stop or even slow our progression forward. The themes of our Founding Fathers must ring in our ears and our souls as loudly today as they did through the fights for our national and personal independence.

This legislation provides continued support for organizations such as the National Underground Freedom Center and the magnificent professionals who are dedicated to improving our community through education. I would like to thank my colleagues for their time and continued support for this institution of which I am proud to have been an original co-sponsor of its founding legislation back in 1999. This legislation insures that The Underground Freedom Center and other institutions of the like will con-

tinue to educate and inspire generations to come.

RESOLUTION FROM THE CITIZENS OF WASHINGTON, CONNECTICUT

HON. CHRISTOPHER S. MURPHY

OF CONNECTICUT

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, July 31, 2007

Mr. MURPHY of Connecticut. Madam Speaker, when we invaded Iraq in March of 2003, we were told that we did so only to prevent the spread of weapons of mass destruction and to enforce compliance with a United Nations resolution. Now, four years and over 3,600 American lives later, we are mired in a bloody civil war that only grows more intractable every day. Despite overwhelming evidence and an increasingly broad public consensus, the Bush Administration refuses to yield to the reality that our presence in Iraq is not only failing to accomplish our goals, it is hindering them.

So many of the reasons and explanations given to justify this war have proven woefully misleading, were prefaced on faulty intelligence and inaccurate information and—in some cases—wishful thinking. The grave threat posed by Saddam Hussein's burgeoning chemical, nuclear and biological weapons arsenal is now believed never to have existed. Iraq's oil infrastructure, which was supposed to fully fund the country's post-war reconstruction efforts, remains severely damaged and in some cases, actively supporting the Iraqi insurgency. We have been saddled with a war that now actively fuels the forces of terror it was waged to prevent.

While the war's greatest cost lies in human lives, it continues to drain our Nation's treasury at an alarming rate. Nearly \$600 billion has been spent toward the Iraq war thus far, and we continue to expend tens of billions of dollars in funding it every month. Equally disheartening is the estimated \$10 billion in missing Iraq reconstruction funds that simply cannot be accounted for.

Meanwhile, the Bush administration refuses to abandon its hopelessly naive belief that major progress is just around the corner in Iraq, despite the conclusions of its own interim report released days ago on the troop "surge" strategy, which found only 8 of 18 major benchmarks had been met by the Iraqi government to date.

As the secret NSA wiretapping program and his use of so-called "signing statements" have demonstrated, the President's irresponsibility in office extends beyond calamitous military decisions to Iraq to an outright disregard for the rule of law. Tragically, this has led an unprecedented number of Americans to lose their trust and belief in government. Where Americans once believed that government had the potential to affect meaningful change, they now see it largely as a tool for cronyism, corruption and deception at the hands of their leaders.

I have seen and heard that disillusion firsthand from my constituents, neighbors and friends. The outcry against our wrongheaded strategy in Iraq and the President's disregard for the rule of law comes not merely from opinion makers, retired generals and former cabinet members, but from the very people

who elected us to represent them in our Nation's capitol. My office receives dozens of phone calls every week from people so distraught by this President that they can see no other choice but to call for his impeachment.

On April 2, 2007, a coalition of concerned citizens from Washington, Connecticut banded together to pass a resolution calling for the President's impeachment. These citizens include Janet Buonaiuto, John Buonaiuto, Sandra Canning, Ken Comet, Bill C. Davis, Diane Dupuis, Rita Frenkel, Paul Frenkel, Helen Gray, Diana Hardee, Joe Mustich, Mildred Pond, Davyne Verstandig. These conscientious residents of Connecticut's Fifth District presented me with their resolution and asked me to raise their concerns to the full House. I commend them for their activism and concern, and wish to register their views before Congress here today.

Thankfully, with the new Democratic majorities here in both houses of the 110th Congress, we now have the ability and the will to take a stand against this administration and its reckless conduct at home and abroad. We will continue to confront this President at every turn on his mismanagement of this war, and we will not cease to challenge the corrosive secrecy and corruption that his lack of leadership has spawned. While the battle is proving to be a hard-fought one, I am confident that we can bring the will of the people to the people's house of Congress.

IN HONOR OF DR. JOHN GARANG DE MABIOR

HON. FRANK R. WOLF

OF VIRGINIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, July 31, 2007

Mr. WOLF. Madam Speaker, I rise in honor of the late Dr. John Garang de Mabior, known to those close to him as "Dr. John." Dr. John was president of the Government of Southern Sudan and chairman of the Sudan People's Liberation Movement/Army, SPLM/A. Yesterday was the second anniversary of Dr. John's sudden death in a helicopter crash.

Dr. John led a heroic life, leading the South of Sudan through the decades-long war with the tyrannical northern government eventually to peace, culminating in the signing of the Comprehensive Peace Agreement on January 9, 2005. The southerners saw him as their founding father, their leader, their inspiration. Dr. John transformed his guerilla movement into an organized rebel force, and then into a political party, and eventually into a partner in the coalition government with the North. His influence over the South's destiny was clear; his leadership set the country on a track toward an agreement to share Sudan's vast wealth and power.

While Dr. John's passing deeply saddened us all, those who desire a bright future for Sudan hold in their memories the strength of Dr. John's character, and his strong and abiding belief that Sudan will indeed one day find peace.